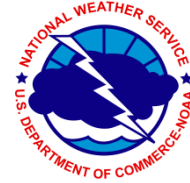




Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Melbourne FL  
500 AM EST Wed Jan 25 2017



### **Today is Tornado and Thunderstorm Awareness Day.**

Tornadoes are more frequent in east central Florida than most people realize. Most of our tornadoes occur during the wet season which typically runs from late May through mid October. These tornadoes are usually small and brief, resulting in little property damage and are not a significant threat to life. However, large long track and deadly tornadoes have occurred in east central Florida during the dry season. The deadliest tornado outbreak in Florida's history occurred the night of February 22 1998 when several large tornadoes swept across central Florida, killing 42 people, destroying 700 structures and causing an estimated 100 million dollars damage. Three of the tornadoes were rated EF-3 intensity while another two tornadoes were rated as EF-2. These tornadoes occurred late at night when people were sleeping which likely contributed to the large number of fatalities.

Tornadoes give much less advance warning than hurricanes, but even a few minutes can make the difference between life and death. Having a NOAA Weather Radio is a critical component of the warning system. Having a weather radio which provides an alert of an approaching tornado, especially in the middle of the night, can save your life. When a tornado threatens your area, stay inside and go to an interior room without windows, on the lowest floor. Abandon mobile homes for a pre-identified sturdy building nearby.

A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued when National Weather Service Doppler radar detects damaging winds 58 mph or greater, or quarter sized hail or larger. Severe thunderstorm and tornado warnings for east central Florida are communicated directly from the Melbourne forecast office to local media via the Emergency Alert System, to NOAA Weather Radio, and to the internet at: <http://weather.gov/mlb>.



## Day 3: Tornado and Thunderstorm Awareness Day



### Did You Know?

- Tornadoes occur more frequently in east central Florida than most people realize
- Most occur from late May – mid October during the wet season and are usually small and brief
- Large, long-track tornadoes have occurred during the winter and spring, especially during El-Nino conditions
- Two separate tornado outbreaks in February 1998 and February 2007 killed a total of 63 people in Central Florida
- A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued when Doppler radar detects damaging winds of 58 mph or greater, or quarter sized hail or larger

### Tornado & Thunderstorm Safety

- ✓ Severe thunderstorm and tornado warnings are communicated directly from the Melbourne forecast office to local media, NOAA Weather Radio, and to the internet
- ✓ NOAA Weather Radio can alert you of approaching severe weather, especially in the middle of the night
- ✓ When a tornado threatens your area, stay inside and go to an interior room without windows, on the lowest floor
- ✓ Abandon mobile homes for a pre-identified sturdy building nearby



February 1998



February 2007